

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13

ISO-00 FEA-01 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00 ERDA-05

COME-00 DODE-00 EPA-01 INR-07 L-03 NSF-01 NSC-05

NSAE-00 PM-04 OES-06 SS-15 SP-02 INT-05 DOTE-00

FMC-01 CG-00 DLOS-09 TRSE-00 OIC-02 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /140 W

-----212043Z 051564 /45

O R 211445Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 628

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONSUL GENOA

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

USUN NEW YORK 2325

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LONDON PASS USDEL TO MSC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EWWT, SENV, INCO, NI

SUBJECT: ADMINISTRATION INITIATIVE ON MARINE OIL POLLUTION

REF: LAGOS 4352

1. EMBASSY PETROLOFF CALLED APRIL 21 ON CAPTAIN H.A. AGATE, FMG OFFICIAL IN CHARGE OF GOVERNMENT INSPECTION SERVICES IN MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND NIGERIAN REPRESENTATIVE AT INCO MEETINGS, TO DISCUSS ADMINISTRATION INITIATIVE ON MARINE OIL POLLUTION. AGATE SAID DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION FOR SHIPPING HAD ALREADY SHOWN HIM COPY OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S ANNOUNCEMENT SENT BY EMBASSY IN MARCH.

2. A CRUSTY OLD CODGER, AGATE OPENED DISCUSSION BY REMARKING SOMEWHAT TESTILY THAT THERE ACTUALLY NOT MUCH NEW IN ADMINISTRATION PROPOSALS THAT NOT ALREADY COVERED IN 1973 INCO CONVENTION. SEGREGATED BALLAST, INERT GAS SYSTEMS, AND BACKUP RADAR WERE ALL IN 1973 CONVENTION. PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVED EMERGENCY STEERING WAS UNCLEAR: ALL VESSELS ALREADY HAVE SECONDARY OVER-THE-RUDDER STEERING SYSTEMS FOR EMERGENCIES, AND IMPROVEMENTS USG HAS IN MIND NEED TO BE DEFINED. IT APPEARED, HE SAID, THAT MAJOR PROPOSAL NOT ALREADY INCLUDED IN 1973 IMCO CONVENTION IS FOR QUOTE DOUBLE BOTTOMS UNQUOTE ON ALL NEW LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TANKERS. AGATE SAID ALL TANKERS ALREADY HAVE DOUBLE BOTTOMS, AND PRESUMED PRESIDENT CARTER WAS REFERRING TO DOUBLE SKIN HULLS. HE EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT HOW FAR IT PRACTICAL TO PUSH THIS REQUIREMENT SINCE TO HIS KNOWLEDGE ONLY ONE COMPANY IN WORLD, MOBIL OIL, HAS USED THIS VERY EXPENSIVE CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUE, AND ON ONLY A FEW OF ITS LATEST VESSELS.

3. WHEN EMBOFF MADE IT RWEAR HE WAS THERE TO LISTEN AND TO DISCUSS WAYS IN WHICH USG WISHED TO COOPERATE WITH OTHER NATIONS THROUGH IMCO, AGATE MALLOWED AND SAID HE UNDERSTANDS AND IS FULLY SYMPATHETIC TO USG CONCERN OVER OIL POLLUTION. HE WITNESSED CAPE COD OIL SPILL ON TV IN U.S. IN HIS OPINION, LENGTH AND QUALITY OF EXPERIENCE NOW BEING REQUIRED FOR OFFICERS TO TAKE COMMEND OF A VESSEL IS DETERIORATING AT AN ALARMING RATE, AND SEVERAL OF WORST OIL SPILLS, INCLUDING THAT OFF CAPE COD, AND TPRREY CANYON, HAD BEEN CAUSED BY CAPTIONS PLOWING BLINDLY THROUGH SHALLOW, DANGEROUS WATERS ON AUTOMATIC STEERING. THERE NOT ANY DOUBT TRAINING SHOULD BE UPGRADED. HOWEVER, HE

SAID, QUOTE WHAT DISTURBS US IS THAT THE USG MIGHT TAKE UNILATERAL ACTION IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT WOULD BRING THE WORLD TANKER TRADE TO A STANDSTILL UNQUOTE.

4. AGATE SAID OTHER COUNTRIES GOT FEELING AT LAST IMCO MEETINGS THAT U.S. DELEGATION'S ATTITUDE WAS QUOTE COME HELL OR HIGH WATERMGE'RE GOING TO PUSH THIS THROUGH CONGRESS UNQUOTE AND THEREAFTER ANY AND EVERY SHIP CARRYING OIL TO U.S. WOULD HAVE TO MEET NEW STANDARDS (E.G. SEGREGATED BALLAST). NIGERIA, AGATE SAID WAS FORTUNATE IN THIS RESPECT IN THAT IT WAS JUST ENTERING THE TANKER BUSINESS. HE HAD HIMSELF INSISTED, OVER CONSIDERABLE OPPOSITION, THAT NIGERIA'S FIRST TANKER, THE YUGOSLAV BUILT 270,000 DWT OLOIBIRI, BE EQUIPPED WITH SEGREGATED BALLAST CAPABILITY. THE OLOIBIRI, HE ADDED, ALSO HAS INERT GAS YSTEMS AND TWO TYPES OF RADAR. HOWEVER, OTHER NATIONS LIKE BRITAIN AND NORWAY, WITH LARGE EXISTING TANKER FLEETS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WOULD SIMPLY BE UNPREPARED TO SHOULDER THE COST OF REFITTING THEIR SHIPS FOR SEGREGATEDIBALLAST, WHICH HE PUT AT ABOUT DOLLARS 250,000 PER VESSEL, ESPECIALLY WHEN SUCH LARGE PERCENTAGE OF WORLD TANKER FLEET LAID UP.

5. AGATE SUGGESTED THAT IF U.S. CAMPAIGNED ACTIVELY TO SPEED UP PROCESS OF ACCESSION TO 173 IMCO CONVENTION IT COULD ACHIEVE THE GOALS OF PRESENT ADMINISTRATION INITIATIVE WITHOUT ONUS OF UNILATERAL ACTION. BOARDING PARTIES, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD AUTOMATICALLY BE SAVED AND ACCEPTED ONCE 1973 CONVENTION, WHICH VIRTUALLY OUTLAWED MARINE POLLUTION OF ANY SORT, CAME INTO FORCE, PROBLEM IS THAT MANY COUNTRIES DON'T UCDERSTAND WHAT 1973 CONVENTION IS ALL ABOUT. WE DIDN'T EITHER, HE SAID(BUT WE GOT THE JUMP ON OTHER LDC'S BY ASKING IMCO EXPERTS TO COME TO NIGERIA TO PREPARE A REPORT ON EXACTLY WHAT THE COUNTRY'S OBLIGATIONS WOULD BE UNDER THE 1973 CONVENTION AND WHAT IT WOULD COST TO MEET THEM. THAT REPORT IS NOW COMPLETED. CLEAR IMPLICATION WAS THAT NIGERIA SUPPORTS RATIFICATION OF 1973 CONVENTION.

6. AGATE SAID HE HAD SUGGESTED AT MEPC MEETING THAT ONE METHOD OF FACILITATING EFFECTIVE POLICING THAT WOULD BE REQUIRED BY STIFF 1973 CONVENTION RESTRICTIONS WOULD BE TO ESTABLISH FIXED SEA LANES FOR ALL OIL TANKER TRAFFIC. THESE WOULD BE EASY TO MONITOR FOR POLLUTION, AND WOULD REDUCE ACCIDENTS. PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZING SUCH LANES SHOULD NOT BA INSURMOUNTABLE GIVEN PRECEDENT OF CONVOY OPERATIONS DURING TWO WORLD WARS. EASUM

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Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 21-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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